

The University of Chicago

ARCHBISHOP HUGHES AND THE
CIVIL WAR

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1933

By

RENA MAZYCK ANDREWS

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Patriotism, in ante-bellum days, was believed to be indigenous and the monopoly of Protestants.¹ To the spiritual descendants of Puritans, any striking expression of interest in the welfare of the country on the part of a Catholic of European birth or parentage would have been regarded with suspicion.² And yet, though long dominated by Anglo-Saxon farmers and evangelical preachers, there was to come to the United States a subtle change in outlook, along with the many changes ushered in by the Civil War. In accounting for the wider horizons of the new day, no single influence will be found to have been more effective in overcoming nativistic prejudice than that of the foreign-born Catholic prelate whose patriotic service to his adopted country here invites our attention.

One November morning in 1819, there appeared at the doors of Mount St. Mary's at Emmitsburg³ a prepossessing young man who offered to exchange his labor in the Seminary garden for board and tuition.⁴ This ambitious youth was John Hughes, two years re-

¹John Adams to James Warren, March 15, 1775, Life and Works of John Adams, IX, 355.

²John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, May 19, 1821, ibid., I, 398.

³John R.G. Hassard, Life of the Most Reverend John Hughes, D.S., First Archbishop of New York, with extracts from his private correspondence (New York, 1866), p. 23. Hereafter cited as "Hassard."

⁴Ibid., Hughes to Mayor Harper, May 17, 1844. Lawrence L. Kehoe, Ed., Complete Works of John Hughes (Sec. ed. New York, 1865), I, 452.

moved from the Emerald Isle, and destined for high place in the ecclesiastical world. By 1850, he had risen to be the first archbishop of New York.⁵

His reputation was made by the vigorous part played in the overthrow of trusteeism in the Philadelphia churches,⁶ and in his debate with the Rev. John Breckinridge.⁷ In 1830, and again in 1834, the following subjects were debated: "Is the Protestant religion the religion of Christ?" and "Is the Roman Catholic religion, in any or all of its doctrines and principles, inimical to civil and religious liberty?"⁸ This debate marked the beginning of a long controversial career.

In the New York public school controversy of 1840-1842, Hughes played a conspicuous role,⁹ organizing for campaign purposes, an independent Catholic party, which his enemies declared "could be given to the Whigs or the Loco Focos at the wave of his crozier."¹⁰ It was at this time that he made contacts with the leading politicians of the State particularly with Horace Greeley,¹¹ William H. Seward,¹² and Thurlow Weed,¹³ and gained

⁵Hassard, p. 337.

⁶Ibid., p. 117; American Catholic Historical Society Researches, pp. 17, 134; American Catholic Historical Society Records, 20: 273, 352, 369.

⁷Hassard, p. 156.

⁸Kehoe, Introduction.

⁹Hughes to Mayor Harper, op. cit.; Hassard, 227 et seq.; Kehoe, I, 113, 270, 271, 154, 155, 183; Christian Advocate and Journal, Oct. 14, 1840, Nov. 10, 1841, Nov. 16, 1842; New York Observer, Aug. 1, Nov. 7, 1840; Apr. 9, 1842; New York Herald, Oct. 29, 1844; New York Weekly Tribune, Jan. 25, 1844.

¹⁰New York Herald, Oct. 29, 1844.

¹¹Seward to Hughes, Albany, Feb. 10, 1842, Hughes MS, St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, New York; Hassard, p. 305.

¹²Seward-Hughes correspondence, Hughes MS.

¹³Thurlow Weed, Autobiography (N.Y., 1883-84), I, 500, 501.

for himself the unwelcome name of politician, which he was never able completely to live down.

Native American and Know-Nothing agitation in the decades of the forties and fifties¹⁴ brought out both the forceful and the persuasive powers of Hughes. His spirited defense of Catholic interests¹⁵ endeared the militant bishop to his Irish parishioners and assured him a devoted following on other occasions when danger threatened. At the same time, he succeeded so well in restraining their bellicose tendencies, over stimulated, though they were, under provocation of down-with-papery mobs,¹⁶ that he was able later to "claim the merit of having prevented" a "fearful crisis."¹⁷ Thus, before the Civil War had precipitated a more serious crisis, he had won his way to leadership in Irish-Catholic circles.

Nativistic animosities now gave place to sectional hatreds aroused by the long debate over slavery. Since agitation on this subject was a disruptive force in American church life¹⁸ two decades before its political aspects severed the Union, it was

¹⁴Baptist Advocate, Apr. 18, May 9, 16, July 11, 1844; Baptist Record, Philadelphia, May 15, June 5, 1844; Freeman's Journal, New York, May 9, 11, 1844; New York Chronicle, Dec. 24, 31, 1853; Christian Advocate and Journal, Mar. 16, 1854; Congressional Globe, 33 Cong., 1 sess., XXIX (New Ser.), 681-691.

¹⁵"Circular of Archbishop Hughes," New York, Dec. 15, 1853; Kehoe, II, 721; Letter to Mayor Harper, op. cit.; Hassard, pp. 273-79, 361, 364-66.

¹⁶The Freeman's Journal, New York, May 9, 1844.

¹⁷Letter to Mayor Harper, op. cit.

¹⁸W.W. Sweet, Our American Churches (Cincinnati, 1924); J.N. Norwood, The Schism in the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1844 (New York, 1925); L.G. Vander Velde, The Presbyterian Churches and the Federal Union, 1861-1869 (Harvard Historical Studies XXXIII, Cambridge, 1932); The Christian Advocate and Journal, Aug. 7, 1844.

inevitable that Catholic, as well as Protestant prelates, should be drawn into the discussion. Thus despite the fact that the attitude of the Roman Church to slavery was one of studied silence, Archbishop Hughes could not resist publishing a controversial article entitled "The Abolition Views of Brownson Overthrown."¹⁹ Here his protest against the hysterical propaganda of the abolitionists was so vigorous as to leave the impression in many minds that he was a zealous defender of the 'peculiar institution' as it then existed in the Southern States, if not an apologist for the slave trade. His discussion of the origin and justification of slavery suggests the social philosophy of the planter aristocracy and particularly its classic exposition in the essay of Professor Thomas B. Dew of Virginia.²⁰

A reprint of the Archbishop's article in a French journal on the eve of his audience of the Emperor narrowly missed being the occasion of considerable embarrassment.²¹ More fortunate in escaping publication was an equally imprudent article which he wrote a year later in response to a call for a united protest by the New York clergy against the Emancipation Proclamation.²²

With this one exception, however, Hughes was a loyal supporter of all government policies and a staunch Unionist.²³ In his correspondence with leading southern bishops, he ably refuted the secession argument and its economic justification, which

¹⁹The Metropolitan Record, cited in the Baltimore Catholic Mirror, Oct. 12, 1861.

²⁰Pro-Slavery Argument, Charleston, 1852.

²¹Le Journal des Debats, Dec. 24, 1861; New York Tribune, Jan. 13, 1862; Le Correspondant, Jan. 24, 1862.

²²H.L. Richardson to Archbishop Hughes, New York, Dec. 7, 11, 1862; Hughes to Richardson, n.d., Hughes MS.

²³"War and Catholics," n.d., Hughes MS.

the Bishop of Charleston had evidently inherited along with the theories of Calhoun and the Nullifiers.²⁴

Meanwhile the 'melancholy strife'²⁵ was at hand. Among the Archbishop's papers is an anti-abolitionist version of the John Brown raid based upon first hand information gained through his intimate relations with Buchanan.²⁶ In this letter Hughes betrays the root of his prejudice against abolitionists by his characterization of John Brown's financial supporters as "infidels and heretics."²⁷

Although he did not share Seward's idea of the irrepressible nature of the conflict, yet, when once war had begun, he insisted upon its vigorous prosecution in order to bring hostilities to a speedy conclusion.²⁸ Many of his letters to Seward are filled with advice on the conduct of the war.²⁹ Urging adequate protection³⁰ of the national capital and a strict enforcement of the blockade,³¹ he urged even more the importance of opening the

²⁴Bp. Lynch to Abp. Hughes, Charleston, Nov. 26, 1860. in the Metropolitan Record, New York, Dec. 8, 1860; Bp. Whelan to Abp. Hughes, Wheeling, May 3, 1861, Hughes MS; Hughes to Whelan, New York, May 7, 1861, ibid.; Lynch to Hughes, Charleston, Aug. 4, 1861, New York Tribune, Sept. 5, 1861; Hughes to Lynch, Aug. 23, 1861, Kehoe, II, 513. For press comment upon "Bishops and the War," see the New York Tribune, Sept. 5, 1861; The Independent, Sept. 12, 1861; New York Herald, Oct. 17, 1861; Brownson's Quarterly Review, Jan., 1862.

²⁵So the Archbishop habitually referred to the Civil War.

²⁶Hughes happened to be in Buchanan's office on two occasions when detailed reports were brought in from Harper's Ferry.

²⁷Hughes to Augustin Cochin, Paris, Jan. 28, 1862, Hughes MS.

²⁸Hughes to Seward, Apr. 28, 1861, Hughes MS.

²⁹In the Hughes-Seward correspondence, thirty-four letters were exchanged from April to October, 1861. Hughes MSS.

³⁰Hughes to Seward, June 1, 3, 18, 21, 1861, Hughes MS.

³¹Hughes to Seward, May 10, June 3, Oct. 21, 1861; Rome, May 10, 1862. Hughes MSS.

Mississippi.³²

Among his own people he stimulated volunteer enlistments in the army and the services of chaplains and nurses.³³ One of his most inspiring appeals was addressed to the Catholic clergy of his province on "Duty to the Country."³⁴

Danger of European intervention,³⁵ in the autumn of 1861, prompted the Administration to appoint Hughes as one of its unofficial diplomatic representatives abroad.³⁶ His fitness for a mission of a confidential nature may have been suggested by President Polk's proposal, in 1846, that Hughes go to Mexico in a somewhat similar capacity.³⁷ Other reasons for his choice were doubtless, the contacts with notables³⁸ which he had made on previous European visits, and the prestige he had gained through his financial and moral support of the papal cause whenever the temporal sovereignty of the Pope was imperiled.³⁹ However, his anglophobe tendencies, which he tried vainly to overcome or dis-

³²Hughes to Seward, Apr. 28, June 1, 18, Oct. 10, 15, 1861. Hughes MSS.

³³Hughes to General W. Scott, May 7, 1861; General Scott to Hughes, Washington, May 13, 1861; Hughes to Major Garesche, Sept. 24, 1862, Hughes MSS.; Hughes to Archbishop Kenrick, Hassard, p. 442; Lincoln to Hughes, Oct. 21, 1861, Hughes MS.

³⁴Undated manuscript, Hughes Papers.

³⁵Seward to Charles Francis Adams, Mar. 7, 1862, MS Inst., England, No. 201.

³⁶Seward to Hughes, Washington, Nov. 2, 1861, MS Inst., France, No. 81.

³⁷Diary of President Polk (Quaife Ed.) May 19, 1846, pp. 408, 409; James Buchanan to J.R.G. Hassard, Wheatlands, Nov. 8, 1864, America, 37: 587.

³⁸Hassard, pp. 210, 215, 218, 407; A.C.R.S. Researches, 22: 370.

³⁹Hassard, pp. 339, 416-21.

guise, would have unfitted him for effective service in England. ⁴⁰

Arriving in France when public feeling was excited over the Trent Affair, ⁴¹ Hughes joined with Thurlow Weed and John Bigelow in explaining away the seeming violation of neutral rights in the capture of Mason and Slidell, and in creating sentiment in favor of permitting the United States to adjust her domestic difficulties without foreign interference. ⁴²

In this strained situation, an audience of the Emperor seemed to him of supreme importance. But William Dayton, the American Minister, was in no mood to encourage the diplomatic activities of an unofficial agent, ⁴³ and declined to arrange for the Archbishop's presentation at court. ⁴⁴ Hughes then took matters in his own hands, ⁴⁵ with the result that a few days later he was being received with marked courtesy by Napoleon and Eugenie at the Tuileries. ⁴⁶

To his imperial hosts he urged two courses of action. One was to mediate in the event of a war between the United States and England. The other was to make France independent of southern

⁴⁰ Draft of letter to the Dublin Freeman's Journal, Paris, Dec. 11, 1861, Hughes MS; Hughes to Seward, Jan. 3, 1862, ibid.

⁴¹ Hughes to Seward, Nov. 28, 1861, Hughes MS; Bigelow to Seward, Paris, Dec. 3, 1861, Consular Letters, Vol. 12.

⁴² Hughes to Seward, Dec. 5, 6, 12, 27, 1861, Hughes MSS.

⁴³ Hughes to Seward, Nov. 28, 1861, Ibid.

⁴⁴ Hughes to Seward, Dec. 18, 1861, ibid; Dayton to Seward, Aug. 28, 1862, MS Desp., 84.

⁴⁵ Hughes to Seward, Dec. 27, 1861, Hughes MS; Hughes to Mrs. Rodrigue, Dec. 27, 1861, Hassard, p. 468.

⁴⁶ Hughes to Seward, Dec. 29, 1861, Hughes MS; 'Memorandum' of the interview, ibid.

cotton by encouraging its culture in Algeria. But the Emperor declined to commit himself to either proposition.⁴⁷

Other matters that came up for discussion were the blockade and the question of Cuba.⁴⁸ Since the latter was a subject about which Eugenie, as a Spanish princess, was 'naturally sensitive,'⁴⁹ Hughes made the most of his opportunity to inflame her mind with suspicion of the design of the Confederacy, to seize the island as a part of its slavery-expansion program.⁵⁰

So gracious was his reception that the Archbishop went away highly elated and convinced that recognition of the Confederacy was not likely soon to occur.⁵¹ However, if we take into account the varied forces that were to influence the ultimate decision of Napoleon, it would seem that the imperial audience had been for Hughes a personal, rather than a diplomatic, triumph. Yet, not altogether without significance was the fact that after being relieved of his last apprehension of intervention by the pacific tone of the Emperor's address at the opening of the Corps Legislatif,⁵² Hughes could depart for Rome feeling assured that he left behind a much friendlier feeling for America on the part of the French people than he had found on his arrival.⁵³

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Hughes to Seward, Jan. 11, 1862, Hughes MS.

⁵⁰Hughes also "placed in the hands of Mr. Bigelow" a "document...bearing on the forcible acquisition of Cuba," which he tells Seward will be a "preface to the arrival of Mr. Slidell." Ibid.

⁵¹Hughes to Seward, Dec. 29, 1861, Hughes MS.

⁵²Bigelow to Seward, Paris, Jan. 17, 1862, Consular Letters, p. 12; Hughes to Seward, Jan. 24, Feb. 1, 1862, Hughes MSS; Le Moniteur, Jan. 29, 1862.

⁵³Hughes to Seward, Paris, Feb. 11, 1862, Hughes MS.

In Rome the Archbishop basked in the favor of the Pope and his ministers.⁵⁴ Meeting pilgrims and high ecclesiastics from every Catholic country, he continued to create sentiment for the Union cause.⁵⁵ Repeating the tactics he had used with Eugenie, he convinced the Spanish bishops that their country's hold upon Cuba would be endangered if the Confederates won the war.⁵⁶

In Ireland Hughes made a number of speeches in which he painted such a roseate picture of America⁵⁷ as to suggest that Administration approval⁵⁸ of his visit to the land of his birth may not have been altogether innocent of the design that lay back of the famous Seward circulars.⁵⁹ No evidence has been found, however, to suggest that the Archbishop was knowingly a party to any scheme for gaining recruits in Ireland for the Federal army.

On his return to New York after an absence of more than eight months, Hughes was saddened to find the Catholic population thinned by losses resulting from over-enthusiastic volunteering during the first year of the war.⁶⁰ Yet, laying aside his personal inclinations, and acting in response to what seems to have

⁵⁴ Hughes to Seward, Rome, Feb. 21, 1862, Hughes MS;
Hughes to Mrs. Rodrigue, May 9, 1862, Hassard, p. 478.

⁵⁵ Hughes to Seward, May 1, 8, Apr. 25, 1862, Hughes MSS.

⁵⁶ Hughes to Seward, Rome, Feb. 21, Mar. 1, 10, June 12, 1862, Hughes MSS.

⁵⁷ Speech at Dublin, New York Freeman's Journal, Aug. 16, 1862; Speech at Cork, Cork Examiner, Aug. 1, 1862, cited in Kehoe, II, 773.

⁵⁸ Hassard, pp. 471, 472.

⁵⁹ Bigelow, Retrospections, I, 563.

⁶⁰ Archbishop Hughes to the Editor of the New York Herald, July 15, 1863.

been a hint from Washington,⁶¹ he preached a stirring sermon, urging that "volunteering continue and the draft be made; if 300,000 be not enough this week, next week make a draft of 300,000 more."⁶²

Although his own clergy and people upheld his policies, outside his archepiscopal province a storm of criticism from the pro-southern Catholic press followed this 'bugle blast.'⁶³ Particularly acrimonious was the controversy which ensued with the Baltimore Catholic Mirror, which considered it "incompatible" in a "minister of religion" to "act as champion of desolation, blood, and fratricide."⁶⁴ Hughes made a spirited reply to the charges of his enemies.⁶⁵ His letters to friends in Rome, however, betray his deep concern over the misrepresentation of his sermon that had penetrated Vatican circles through controversial literature and through southern emissaries.⁶⁶

Loss of favor at Rome was soon evident. When Lincoln confessed that it was not in his power to offer a reward that Hughes would accept and suggested that the Administration "would feel particular gratification in any honor which the Pope might have it in his power to confer upon him,"⁶⁷ an evasive answer was returned, and the Red Hat was not forthcoming.

⁶¹Hughes to Seward, Nov. 1, 1862, in the Metropolitan Record, Nov. 15, 1862.

⁶²Ibid., Aug. 23, 1862.

⁶³Baltimore Catholic Mirror, Oct. 18, 1862.

⁶⁴Ibid., Oct. 4, 1862.

⁶⁵Hughes to the Archbishop of Baltimore, n.d. Hughes MSS; Metropolitan Record, Oct. 4, 11, 25, Nov. 1, 1862; Hughes to Seward, Nov. 1, 1862, loc. cit.

⁶⁶To Father Smith, Oct. 1, 1862, Hughes MS.

⁶⁷Hassard, pp. 485, 486.

Both at home and abroad the situation now confronting Hughes was depressing. In Europe, Confederate agents seemed to be undermining whatever he had tried to accomplish for the Union.⁶⁸ In America, war weariness was sweeping the land. New York, particularly, was seething with discontent, if not with rebellion. Criticism of government policies fed upon reports of arbitrary arrests and other extra-legal measures of the Administration.⁶⁹ New York merchants, missing southern trade, were inclined to sympathize with their former customers in Dixie.⁷⁰ As a result of the shifting of war purposes from Union-saving to an abolition crusade, negro competition in the labor market threatened to dispossess workmen of their jobs.⁷¹ No longer, therefore, was there a burning zeal among the Irish to die for their adopted country. Then came another call for troops. Its answer was the New York draft riot of July, 1863.

In the pandemonium that raged in the city,⁷² Governor

⁶⁸ Hughes to Father Smith, *op. cit.*; Governor Charles S. Morehead to John Slidell, Rome, Mar. 17, 1863, *O.R....Navies*, Ser. II, Vol. 3, 739, 740; *Charleston Mercury*, Aug. 10, 1863; "Inferential recognition" of the Confederacy in the letter of Pius IX to Jefferson Davis, Rome, Dec. 3, 1863, *O.R....Navies*, Ser. II, No. 67, Vol. 3, 954; T.P. Shaw to Horace Greeley, Manchester, Feb. 15, 1862, *Greeley Papers*, New York Public Library; T.M. Torrens in the *British Quarterly Review*, 41: 358-380.

⁶⁹ Hassard, p. 276; *New York Freeman's Journal*, Apr. 19, 1862; "Sauce for the Goose and Sauce for the Gander," *Metropolitan Record*, Aug. 16, 1862; *ibid.*, Aug. 23, 1862; "Secessionism in New York," *New York Tribune*, Apr. 3, 1862.

⁷⁰ *The Independent*, Oct. 10, 1861; *New York Herald*, Feb. 11, 12, 1861; *American Annual Cyclopaedia*, I (1861), 518. Hughes to Seward, Aug. 27, 1862, *Hughes MS*.

⁷¹ *Metropolitan Record*, Jan. 18, Aug. 9, 1862; *New York Tribune*, Apr. 3, 1862; *The Liberator*, Nov. 14, 1862.

⁷² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, July 16, 23, 1863; *Freeman's Journal*, July 18, 25, Aug. 1, 1863; *New York Herald*, July 13-18, 1862.

Seymour decided to appeal to the Irish-Catholic leader for aid.⁷³ And so it came about that Archbishop Hughes, in his last public appearance, addressed the rioters. Reviving their sense of gratitude for the protection and prosperity they had enjoyed in the new world, he begged them to cast no further discredit upon their birthplace and religion.⁷⁴ Reminiscent of Know-Nothing days, he then reinforced his personal appeal in confidently affirming: "You know I have never deserted you.....I am not a run-away Bishop."⁷⁵ In response, his audience retired peacefully to their homes, and the riot was over.

While it may be that the insurrection had very nearly spent its force before Hughes made his appeal, and that military coercion and the promise of suspension of the draft were the most effective of arguments, yet the rambling speech of the fast-aging prelate was not without significance. Like his August sermon, the Archbishop's message to the rioters was designed to reach a wider audience than his immediate hearers. It was a critical moment, he felt, in the country's history, and nowhere more than in its metropolis was the nation's fate to be decided by public opinion. Therefore, at this critical point in time and place, Hughes exerted his powerful influence to steady an allegiance that was wavering.

Equally significant, in view of the rabid intolerance bequeathed by the Pilgrim Fathers, was the Governor's recognition of a son of Rome as a positive factor in restoring law, order, and loyalty to the government.

Young America was to come of age in the decades following

⁷³Horatio Seymour to Archbishop Hughes, New York, July 14, 1863, Hughes MS.

⁷⁴New York Tribune, August 18, 1863.

⁷⁵Ibid.

the Civil War; and with the greater sophistication of maturity, fear of Papists was no longer to be an obsession, despite the occasional outbreaks of nativistic sentiment which occur even in our own day. Archbishop Hughes had long combatted the notion that Catholics constituted a 'foreign colony' and that their increase would result in 'foreignizing the country and corrupting its civilization.'⁷⁶ His training of the immigrant in the essentials of good citizenship had inspired confidence in his Americanization program. Hence he may be said to have stimulated among Catholics the growth of those qualities which tended to make them an asset rather than a liability to the nation; while among Protestants he stimulated the growth of a more tolerant spirit.

In evaluating the services of Archbishop Hughes it may be of interest to compare his achievements in American and foreign fields.

In creating sentiment in Europe for the United States, it must be remembered that Hughes was but one among many informal agents, and that his service of less than a year cannot be compared in scope and significance with that of the 'career diplomats.' Moreover, the role he played was, perhaps, most effective when most unobtrusive. Largely conjectural, then, must be our conclusion as to the precise amount of influence he wielded in European capitals.

Less difficult to appraise is the value of his patriotic service at home, since there, among his own people, he was reaping the harvest of his labors of a quarter of a century. With the

⁷⁶"The Beauties of Brownson," Metropolitan Record, Apr. 19, 1862; "The Catholic Chapter in the History of the United States," New York, Mar., 1852, cited in Hassard, n. pp. 344, 345.

exception of the draft riot episode, which did not affect the majority of his flock, he held the Irish Catholics steady in their allegiance and inspired among them both a wholesome respect for the civil law, and a generous enthusiasm, in the first stages of the war, at least, for military service. It would seem, therefore, that the Archbishop was more successful in his Union saving work at home than in what he tried to do overseas.

A serious detriment, however, to his influence at home was the wide-spread belief that he was a politician. The origin of this idea may be traced to his interest in national affairs and to his close relations with Thurlow Weed and William H. Seward. Somehow, behind the scenes, he was supposed to be politically active in their behalf, even as they, in turn reciprocated by promoting Catholic interests. Was there indeed a secret alliance between governor, boss, and bishop?

Indignantly Hughes resented this insinuation, feeling, moreover, that no epithet could so lower the dignity of an ecclesiastic as that of politician. It was a suspicion, however, that plagued him to the end of his day, and still lingers in many minds. Nevertheless, evidence in support of the charge, though diligently searched for, has been found neither in manuscript nor in printed sources .

On the contrary, there is much in his career to indicate that he possessed the qualities which we commonly associate with statesmanship. Among these was absence of sectional bias and partisan prejudice; his willingness to compromise and his preference for the conciliatory tactics of the council chamber to the capricious decisions of the god of battles; his concern for the far-reaching consequences of government policies and his sensitiveness to the interests of a united people; and, finally, his

national outlook and breadth of his sympathy, which appear to have emanated from a mind "large enough to embrace every State and every Territory, as well as the whole people of the United States."⁷⁷

Although Hughes zealously defended the Union cause, he urged Seward to be "as considerate toward the....so-called Confederacy as possible," believing that "Conquest is not always by the sword" and that "statesmanship....may have much to do with it."⁷⁸ Such an attitude might go far to establish his own title to statesmanship.

In a final estimate of his contribution, it may be well to note that, as a prelate of the Roman Church, and, at the same time, as a confidential agent and adviser of the Administration at Washington, Archbishop Hughes occupied a position unprecedented in American History. To the value of his services Abraham Lincoln has himself given eloquent testimony:

....having formed the Archbishop's acquaintance in the earliest days of our country's present troubles, his counsel and advice were gladly sought and continually received by the Government on those points which his position enabled him better than others to consider. At a conjuncture of deep interest to the country, the Archbishop, associated with other, went abroad and did the nation a service there with all the loyalty, fidelity and practical wisdom which on so many other occasions illustrated his great ability for administration.⁷⁹

Coming from the head of a Protestant nation, this testimonial would suggest that Archbishop Hughes had triumphed, by sheer force of personality, over the handicap of a bitterly hated religion. As patriot, the outstanding recognition he won had never before, in the United States, been accorded a foreign-born Catholic

⁷⁷Metropolitan Record, Dec. 8, 1860.

⁷⁸Hughes to Seward, October 15, 1861, Hughes Ms.

⁷⁹To the Very Reverend William Starr, Administrator of the Diocese of New York, Department of State, Washington, Jan. 13, 1864. Transmitted through the Secretary of State, Kehoe, I, 24.

divine. It was through his influence largely that Catholics were no longer under ban.⁸⁰ In response to his reiterated boast that the Church was the "mother of saints and heroes," but "never the mother of cowards,"⁸¹ Irish and German Catholic volunteers in the army had disproved the earlier home-spun theories concerning the origin of patriotism. Therefore, since, in his Union-saving activities, whether in Europe or America, the groups with whom his influence counted most were composed of Catholics, it would seem that his services were of value to his country, largely because he was himself of the Romanist faith.

His whole career, in fact, may be looked upon as an answer to the challenge of Breckinridge. In his own person, as well as in the reaction he was able to call forth from his followers, he demonstrated, in an intolerant age, that a consistent Catholic could be also a consistent patriot.

⁸⁰Hughes to Father Smith, New York, Feb., 1859, Hassard, p. 410; Brownson's Quarterly Review (Oct., 1861), 18:523.

⁸¹Address to the draft rioters, reported in the New York Tribune, Aug. 18, 1862.

